



## Taxi Policy Talks Inconclusive; Committee to Examine Digital Platform Proposal



### 'Not Ready for App-Based Taxis': Union Leader Yogesh 'Mogambo' Govekar

Team Goemkarponn

**PORVORIM:** Taxi union leader Yogesh Govekar, popularly known as "Mogambo," has strongly opposed the introduction of app-based taxi services in Goa, stating that taxi operators are not ready to shift to digital platforms and want to continue their traditional mode of business. Govekar said taxi operators were earlier regarded as



"brand ambassadors of the tourism industry," but were later labelled as a "taxi mafia" when the government began pushing for app-based taxi services. "We were called taxi mafia since

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Government, taxi operators to meet again after internal consultations; uniform fares and single platform under discussion

Team Goemkarponn

**PORVORIM:** A meeting between the Goa government led by Chief Minister Dr Pramod Sawant and taxi operators on Thursday ended without a final decision on the proposed

digital taxi policy, with both sides agreeing to continue discussions through a committee that will examine the concerns raised by taxi associations. The meeting focused on the government's proposal to introduce a digital

taxi framework aimed at bringing uniformity and transparency in fares across the state.

However, several taxi operators expressed reservations over the possible introduction of a third taxi application and insisted that existing

apps be scrapped before any new system is implemented.

Taxi associations have demanded that the government first discontinue the GoaMiles app before taking discussions on the new



### CM Urges Devotees to Strictly Follow Rules During Shirgao Lairai Jatra

Reviews preparations at temple, appeals for discipline during traditional rituals.

Team Goemkarponn

**SHIRGAO:** Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant offered prayers at the

Shri Lairai Devasthan in Shirgao and reviewed the arrangements for the upcoming Shirgao Jatra,

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### FDA Cracks Down On Food Units In Bardez; 8 Shut, 300 Kg Bananas Destroyed

Team Goemkarponn

**MAPUSA:** The Food and Drugs Administration Goa (FDA) conducted surveillance drives across Bardez taluka, inspecting 20 food business establishments and directing eight units to suspend operations for violations. The inspection covered areas including Mapusa, Anjuna, Assagao, Arpora and Calangute. The team inspected restaurants, sweet marts, food vendors and street food stalls to verify compliance



with food safety norms. During the drive, eight establishments were asked to suspend operations due to non-renewal of licences and unhygienic conditions

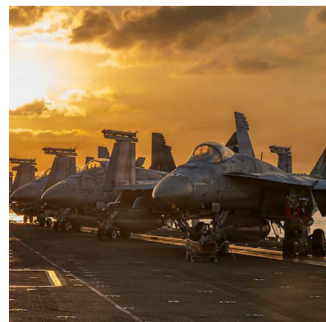
observed at the premises. In a separate action at the Mapusa Sub Yard, around 300 kg of bananas valued at approximately Rs 21,000 were destroyed after officials suspected

artificial ripening using non-permitted chemicals. Samples have been collected for analysis, and officials stated that a case will be registered against the wholesaler if violations are confirmed. Additionally, one hawker was fined Rs 2,000 for operating without valid registration under the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). The FDA stated that such surveillance drives will continue to ensure public health and food safety compliance across the state.

### "Baseless and Fabricated": India Rejects Claims of US Using Its Ports for Strikes on Iran

Government dismisses viral allegation amid escalating conflict in the Middle East.

**New Delhi:** India has firmly rejected claims circulating online that the United States is using Indian ports and naval facilities to carry out attacks on Iran. The clarification came after a video featuring former US Army officer Douglas Macgregor gained widespread attention on social media.



In the video, Macgregor suggested during a television interview that

the United States Navy had begun relying on Indian ports after suffering damage to its own bases. The comments quickly spread online, prompting a response from the Ministry of External Affairs. India's foreign ministry dismissed the statement as inaccurate and warned against the spread of unfounded claims.

### India Tightens Security as Intelligence Warns of Possible Terror Plots

Agencies increase surveillance and operations amid instability in Pakistan and attempted infiltration along the Line of Control

**New Delhi:** India has strengthened its security network following intelligence assessments warning of possible Pakistan backed terror activity targeting major locations such as Mumbai, Delhi and Jammu and Kashmir. Authorities believe the threat may be linked to rising instability



within Pakistan, where escalating conflicts and internal unrest are creating conditions that security planners consider potentially dangerous for

regional stability. Officials have directed multiple security agencies across the country to intensify monitoring and preventive action. In Mumbai, teams from the Maharashtra Anti Terrorism Squad conducted coordinated raids at several locations in Kurla and Govandi.



# A Budget for the Soul of Goa, or a Season of Sops?

When Pramod Sawant says he will present a budget that “people want,” the statement carries unusual weight this year. Goa is heading into an election cycle. That alone makes one thing almost certain. The budget will lean toward the populist.

Election year budgets are rarely austere. They are crafted to reassure, to please and to signal generosity. Subsidies expand. Schemes multiply. Announcements grow louder. There is nothing inherently wrong with welfare measures. Many families depend on them. But the real question is whether this budget will go beyond short-term relief and confront the deeper anxieties shaping public discourse in Goa. The loudest of those anxieties is environmental destruction. Across the state, there is visible unease about hill cutting, large scale land conversion and construction that appears to outrun planning norms. The controversy around Section 39A of the Town and Country Planning Act has intensified public suspicion that development rules are being bent in ways that permanently alter Goa's landscape. Villages fear that once fields and forests are converted, there is no going back.

A populist budget may offer compensation, beautification drives or token green initiatives. But what people are demanding is stronger enforcement, transparent decision-making and a clear commitment that ecological safeguards will not be diluted. Protecting rivers, hills and agricultural land is not an emotional indulgence. It is economic common sense in a state whose tourism and quality of life depend on them.

Employment is another core demand. Young Goans are increasingly vocal about limited opportunities outside tourism and government service. They want support for startups, skill based industries, technology ventures and sustainable agriculture. An election year budget may expand stipends or unemployment

*Tourism itself needs recalibration. While it remains the backbone of the economy, residents in several areas complain about late night noise, traffic chaos, public nuisance and a sense that community life is being pushed aside. A serious budget would invest in better regulation, improved policing and smarter zoning. Without that, any talk of quality tourism will sound hollow. The cost of living has also become a flashpoint. Property prices and rents have risen sharply, particularly in coastal belts and urban centres. Many middle-class families worry that they are being priced out of their own state. An election year budget may roll out housing subsidies or interest relief schemes. The challenge will be ensuring these measures genuinely benefit locals rather than fuelling further speculation.*

allowances. That may provide temporary comfort. But it will not substitute for structural reforms that make it easier for locals to start and grow businesses without being buried in paperwork. Tourism itself needs recalibration. While it remains the backbone of the economy, residents in several areas complain about late night noise, traffic chaos, public nuisance and a sense that community life is being pushed aside. A serious budget would invest in better regulation, improved policing and smarter zoning. Without that, any talk of quality tourism will sound hollow.

The cost of living has also become a flashpoint. Property prices and rents have risen sharply, particularly in coastal

belts and urban centres. Many middle-class families worry that they are being priced out of their own state. An election year budget may roll out housing subsidies or interest relief schemes. The challenge will be ensuring these measures genuinely benefit locals rather than fuelling further speculation. Education and skill development demand sustained investment. Upgrading government schools, modernising curricula and linking vocational training to emerging sectors are long term tasks. They do not produce immediate applause. That is why they often receive less attention in populist budgets. Yet they are essential if Goa's youth are to compete in a changing economy. Then there is the simmering debate around casinos. For many Goans, casinos symbolise a development model that prioritises revenue over social impact. An election year may tempt the government to avoid firm decisions on this front, preferring calibrated statements over concrete action. But the issue is unlikely to fade. It is tied to concerns about law and order, social consequences and the broader identity of the state.

Ultimately, a populist budget can win goodwill in the short term. Direct benefits, subsidies and cash transfers are tangible. They reach households quickly. But voters are not blind to the bigger picture. They see the hills being cut. They see land use changing. They see rents climbing and local businesses struggling. If this budget is to be remembered as more than an election document, it must balance immediate relief with long term responsibility. Goa does not need grand promises alone. It needs stewardship that protects its environment, strengthens its economy and respects its cultural fabric.

In an election year, the temptation to please is powerful. The real test for the government is whether it can resist easy applause and choose durable policy. Goa's future depends on that choice.

## OpEd

### From Democracy to Devotion: The Modi Cult and the shrinking space for Reason

By Sandeep Heble

At every given opportunity, the ruling party's social media cell seems to go into an overdrive, where there is a coordinated, almost devotional effort by hardline supporters to glamourise Prime Minister Narendra Modi and credit him for virtually everything happening in India and across the world. Now, in the midst of the Iran-Israel-US conflict, we are once again being told that India remains safe only because of Modi, and that citizens must thank him for protecting the nation. But thanking Modi when India is not even connected to this Iran War is so very childish. Weren't Indians safe before 2014? Was India in perpetual danger until Modi arrived? The country, it must be noted, lived through major wars and global conflicts equally under earlier Prime Ministers and different political dispensations - the Gulf War between Iraq and Kuwait, the Afghanistan War, the Iraq War, the Libyan conflict, the Syrian civil war, repeated Middle East crises, and countless other flashpoints and battles. India, in fact, did very well earlier too - evacuated its citizens, managed diplomatic relations, and safeguarded national interests then too - without turning any leader into a divine character. But today, reason seems to have surrendered to propaganda. The constant chanting of “Modi, Modi, Modi” has crossed political support and entered the territory of cult worship. It seems Modi is no longer merely an elected Prime Minister but is projected as the ultimate “Bharata Bhagya Vidhata” - the architect of India's destiny itself. At this rate, they might one day even imagine that Rabindranath Tagore wrote “Jana Gana Mana” with the vision of a future Modi in mind. This unquestioning glorification is getting dangerous. Because while Modi's social media followers might celebrate his imagined invincibility, uncomfortable realities are growing. How safe is India, really? Freedom indices are declining. Activists and dissenters are arrested at the drop of a hat. Political opponents face investigative pressures from ED, CBI, Income Tax and other Government arms, and at times even imprisonment. Political Parties are routinely broken, symbols taken away, and democratic institutions weakened. National assets steadily move into the hands of select corporate giants. Institutions, including investigative agencies and even the judicial process, face growing concerns about being truly Independent, some of them even likened to being caged parrots. How soon are we left to forget all that happens? Manipur burned for months with heartbreaking violence, yet the Prime Minister found time for numerous foreign visits but not a single visit to the troubled state. Citizens are booked over fragile “hurt sentiments,” while more important regional concerns - such as land conversion and environmental issues which we see here in Goa quietly slip off the agenda. And here lies the real irony. India's strength has never rested in one individual. It lies in its Constitution, institutions, armed forces, diversity, and democratic institutions. Elevating one leader beyond criticism does not make the nation stronger - it weakens public reasoning itself. Perhaps what India truly needs today is protection - not just from external wars or geopolitical tensions - but from the growing foolishness of political worship and the suffocating culture of social media sycophancy that is hell-bent on elevating one Modi to the status of God.

# Vijai Targets Govt Over Rising Costs, Governance Issues Ahead of Assembly Session

■ GFP MLA says thousands of public grievances submitted; protests likely to put government under pressure.

## Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** Goa Forward Party MLA Vijai Sardesai has launched a sharp criticism of the State government, alleging that it has failed to address the pressing concerns of the people and that the overall situation in Goa is steadily deteriorating.

Speaking ahead of the upcoming Assembly sitting, Sardesai claimed that the government has not effectively resolved the problems faced by citizens. He also alleged



that increasing poverty and visible hardship in several parts of the State reflect what he described as shortcomings in governance and inadequate attention to public welfare.

The GFP leader further

accused the government of ignoring the financial stress faced by ordinary families. He pointed out that rising electricity tariffs and the increasing prices of essential commodities are placing a heavy burden on households, leaving the common man struggling to manage daily expenses.

Referring to preparations for the Assembly session, Sardesai said that a large number of issues have already been flagged by the public.

According to him, a total of 2,193 suggestions and grievances have been submitted for discussion during the session.

He added that legislators have also filed several parliamentary interventions for the sitting. These include 42 starred questions, 210 unstarred questions, 14 Zero Hour submissions, and 14 Calling Attention motions. In addition, four Private Member Bills and three Private Member Resolutions have been placed for consideration.



## GU Students Submit Charter of Demands to Vijai Sardesai

■ Seek faster revaluation results, better transport connectivity and improved campus facilities

## Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** A delegation of students led by Goa University Students Council General Secretary Soham Raut met Goa Forward Party president Vijai Sardesai and submitted a memorandum highlighting several issues affecting students of Goa University and affiliated colleges. The group urged Sardesai to raise these concerns during the upcoming session of the Goa Legislative Assembly.

Among the key matters raised was the delay in the revaluation process. The students said that the declaration of revaluation results often takes a long time and lacks transparency, creating uncertainty for those awaiting corrected marks.

They stressed that timely announcements are important for students applying for higher education and employment, and called for a streamlined and time-bound system. The delegation also sought the extension of the Bal Rath

transport facility to college students. Currently, the scheme benefits students only up to Class 12.

According to the students, many college-goers from financially weaker backgrounds struggle with daily travel expenses and difficulties in accessing reliable transport.

They requested the government to either expand the existing scheme or introduce a similar support mechanism for higher education students.

Another major demand was the introduction of dedicated bus services from each taluka to the Goa University campus. The students pointed out that a large number commute from distant areas, and limited transport connectivity often results in long travel hours, higher costs and safety concerns, particularly for female students.

They said these issues frequently lead to delays in reaching classes or missing lectures altogether.

# State Proposes Changes to Tillari Irrigation Project Command Area

■ Some areas to be removed while new tracts in Pernem and Bicholim likely to be brought under irrigation coverage.

## Team Goemkarponn

**TILLARI:** The Goa government has proposed revisions to the command area of the Tillari Irrigation Project, dropping certain land parcels while adding new areas to improve the utilisation of irrigation facilities. As per a notification published in the Official Gazette, about 3.65 lakh square



metres (36.53 hectares) of land has been proposed for removal from the existing command area

of the project. The parcels identified for deletion are located in Dhargal and Torsem in Pernem taluka; Calangute, Assagao, Anjuna, Parra and Revora in Bardez taluka; and Latambarcem, Sarvan, Bicholim and Mayem in Bicholim taluka. Meanwhile, the government has proposed to include nearly 22.96 lakh square metres

(292.96 hectares) of land within the project's command area. The additional land parcels fall in the villages of Payem, Pernem, Corgao and Paliem across Pernem and Bicholim talukas. The Command Area Development Board approved the changes after partially modifying its earlier notification issued on November 25, 2024.

# Plea in HC Seeks Clarity on Electoral Roll for Panaji Corporation Polls

■ Petitioner raises concern over possible misuse of deleted voter names.

## Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** A social activist has approached the Bombay High Court at Goa seeking clarification on the electoral roll that will be used for the upcoming elections to the Corporation of the City of Panaji (CCP).

In a writ petition, Uday Chari, who had earlier contested from Ward 18, requested the court to direct authorities to

specify which electoral roll will be adopted for the municipal polls. According to the petition, the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls for 2026 was completed on February 21.

The official press release issued after the revision stated that 39,592 names were removed from the voter list, while 12,166 new entries were added. Chari argued that if the civic elections are

conducted without strictly relying on the updated SIR electoral roll, there is a risk that names which were deleted could be exploited for fraudulent voting or impersonation.

The petition further expressed concern that the presence of nearly 40,000 deleted entries could potentially create a pool of "ghost voters", which may be vulnerable to manipulation during the polling process.

# AI-Based Screening Helps Detect Lung Cancer Early in Goa: Rane

■ Over 1.16 lakh scans conducted under State's AI-enabled lung health initiative.

## Team Goemkarponn

**Panaji:** Goa's efforts to integrate artificial intelligence into preventive healthcare are showing encouraging results, with thousands of patients screened for lung-related ailments under the State's AI-enabled lung cancer screening programme.

Health Minister Vishwajit Rane said the initiative reflects the vision of Prime Minister



Narendra Modi to promote human-centric use of artificial intelligence in public healthcare, enabling early detection and timely medical intervention.

According to official

data, between March 2024 and February 2025, a total of 1,16,671 scans were carried out across multiple screening centres in the State, including the Goa Medical College and Hospital. The screenings detected 11,663 lung nodules, of which 1,771 were categorised as high-risk. These cases are being closely monitored by medical specialists for further evaluation and treatment.

## Man Duped Of Rs 2.07 Lakh In Fake Ship Job Scam In Margao

**Team Goemkarponn**

**Margao:** A case of cheating has been registered at Margao Town Police Station after a man was allegedly duped of Rs 2.07 lakh by unknown persons on the pretext of providing a job on a ship. According to the complaint filed by Tejas Jadhav,



a resident of Calconda, Salcete, originally from Pune, Maharashtra, the incident occurred between

January 26 and February 12 at Calconda, Margao. The complainant stated that the accused persons allegedly showed him fake documents and shared fabricated ship details, promising employment onboard a vessel. Believing the offer to be genuine, he transferred a total amount of Rs

2,07,000 through multiple transactions. However, the accused allegedly failed to provide the promised job and subsequently stopped responding, thereby cheating the complainant. Further investigation is being carried out by PSI Swadesh Dessai of Margao Town Police Station.



## 41-Year-Old Man Found Dead At Fatorda Residence

**Team Goemkarponn**

**Margao:** A 41-year-old man was found hanging at his residence in Gauliwada, Fatorda, on Wednesday morning. Police said they received a phone call at around 9.33 am from an unknown person informing that a man had allegedly hanged himself at his house. Upon enquiry with family members, it was revealed that at about 6.30 am, the daughter of the deceased went to her father's room and found him hanging from a wooden beam using a surgical dressing

bandage as ligature material. She immediately alerted her grandfather, Auduji Langote, and other family members. The grandfather and brother of the deceased brought him down and informed the police and 108 emergency services. The 108 staff examined him and declared him dead. The deceased was identified as Jitendra Langote (41), a resident of Gauliwada, Fatorda. Police conducted the inquest panchanama and referred the body for post-mortem examination at South Goa District Hospital.

## Mumbai Rider Booked For Rash Driving After Old Goa Crash

**Team Goemkarponn**

**Old Goa:** Old Goa Police Station has registered a case of rash and negligent driving against a 32-year-old Mumbai resident following an accident at Gandhi Circle, Old Goa. As per the state complaint lodged by HC Rajan Zalmi, the incident occurred on

March 2 at around 3 pm. The accused, identified as Dhaval Jain (32), a resident of Mumbai, was allegedly riding a Fascino scooter (GA03V5977) in a rash and negligent manner while proceeding from Old Goa towards Ponda. On reaching Gandhi Circle, he allegedly dashed against a Honda Activa

(GA04P8094) which was proceeding towards Gaudalim from Neura road.

Due to the impact, the Activa rider Bahaar Gawas (20), a resident of Charvane, Bicholim, and pillion rider Anuradha Kerkar (21), a resident of Thane, Valpoi, Sattari, sustained injuries. Both were shifted in a 108



ambulance to Goa Medical College and Hospital for treatment and were later discharged after medical care. Police said the accused fled from the scene along with his scooter after the accident. Further investigation is being carried out by HC Rajan Zalmi of Old Goa Police Station.

## Labourer Held With 56 Grams Of Suspected Ganja In Bicholim

**Team Goemkarponn**

**Bicholim:** A 23-year-old labourer was arrested by Bicholim Police Station for allegedly possessing 56 grams of suspected ganja at Vathadev, Sarvan.

According to police, PSI Akash Parwar lodged a state complaint after conducting a narcotic raid based on specific information. The raid was carried out on March 3 between 8.36 pm and 9.22 pm at the cricket ground opposite AJ Supermarket at Vathadev, Sarvan,



Bicholim. The accused, identified as Anees Ansari (23), a resident of Vathadev, was allegedly caught red-handed while in illegal possession of 56 grams of green leafy substance suspected to be ganja, valued at approximately Rs 5,600. Police said the accused had allegedly come to deliver the narcotic substance to prospective customers. He was formally arrested at 2.33 am on March 4 and remains in police custody. Further investigation is being carried out by PSI Krishna Gawas of Bicholim Police Station.

## Decomposed Body Found In Electricity Meter Room At Cuncolim

**Team Goemkarponn**

**Cuncolim:** The decomposed body of an unidentified male was found inside an electricity operating room behind the Cuncolim Municipality commercial building on Wednesday afternoon.

According to police, information was received at around 12.52 pm from Vishal Naik, Supervisor of Cuncolim Municipality, stating that a decomposed dead body was noticed inside the electricity meter room.

Police personnel

visited the spot and found the body of a male person, estimated to be between 30 and 50 years of age, in a fully decomposed condition. The police conducted the scene of unnatural death (UD) occurrence panchanama and inquest



panchanama at the site. The body was later shifted and preserved at South District Hospital Margao for further medico-legal formalities.

Further enquiry is being carried out by LPSI Riyanka Naik of Cuncolim Police Station.

## Scooter Stolen From Open Parking In Comba

**Team Goemkarponn**

**Margao:** A theft case has been registered at Margao Town Police Station following the alleged theft of a Honda Activa scooter from Comba.

According to the complaint lodged by Mohanmad Arif Shaikh, a resident of Ponda, the incident



occurred on March 2 at around 1.10

pm near Digicom Academy, Comba, Margao.

The complainant stated that he had parked his Honda Activa in an open parking area when unknown accused persons allegedly stole the vehicle.

Further investigation is being carried out by PSI Sanjay Velip of Margao Town Police Station.

## Decomposed Body Of Unknown Man Found At Caranzalem Beach

**Team Goemkarponn**

**Panaji:** An unidentified decomposed male body was found near the beach area at Caranzalem on Tuesday evening.

According to information from Panaji Police Station, a phone call was received from

PC Siddhesh Dessai stating that a lifeguard had informed him about an unknown man lying near the beach area at Caranzalem.

Acting on the information, PSI Nitin Naik visited the spot where a decomposed male person was found lying face down on the grass. A search



of the surrounding area was conducted by the police team, however, nothing suspicious was found at the scene.

Police conducted the scene of panchanama in the presence of two panch witnesses and recorded the proceedings on E-Sakshya. The Goa State Forensic Science Laboratory

team was called to the spot and necessary samples were collected.

The body was later shifted to the morgue at Goa Medical College and Hospital for preservation.

Further enquiry is in progress under PSI Nitin Naik of Panaji Police Station.

# MPT pensioners serve notice to Mormugao Port Authority, warn of protest over pending demand

## Team Goemkarponn

**MORMUGAO:** The Mormugao Port Trust Pensioners' Association has served a formal notice to the Mormugao Port Authority (MPA), warning that pensioners and family pensioners will stage a protest if their long-pending demands are not addressed within 30 days. In a letter dated December 23, 2025, addressed to the Chairperson of MPA



at Headland, Sada, the association stated that a conference held on November 16, 2025, at Ravindra Bhavan, Baina, Vasco, had unanimously passed several resolutions highlighting key concerns of pensioners. Among the primary demands is the

withdrawal of any proposal to close down the Port Hospital. The association maintained that no other port in India has moved to shut its hospital or adopt a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model. It further stated that if a PPP model is introduced, the yearly

subscription of pensioners and family pensioners must be borne by the MPA. The association has also demanded payment of arrears based on the second formula/methodology before the New Year 2026, provision of medical benefits to SPVRS retirees who retired prior to 2017 on par with those who retired after 2017, and counting of 50 per cent ELR service for pension benefits.

# Kartavya for Goa & Goans is prime focus: LoP Yuri Alemao

## Team Goemkarponn

**Panaji:** LoP Yuri Alemao stated that the Opposition will ensure that the budget session addresses the burning issues of Goa and Goans. He said that Kartavya for Goa and Goans is prime focus. He said that people are frustrated with the political optics of the government ignoring the pressing demands of the people.

"The first and foremost 'Kartavya' of all legislators is to amend the TCP Act scrapping 39A.

Nothing could be the gift of the budget session than the scrapping of 39A which has given an unguided power for change of use or zone resulting in rampant sale and alienation of land. The reckless real estate expansion with total disregard to the carrying capacity of villages has resulted in demographic issues and collapse of civic and public facilities," Alemao said.



"The Opposition expects the Speaker to consider the multiple bills filed by MLAs for protection of land and environment and clear the decks for introduction of the bills in the House," he said.

He said that the critical issues are of casinos, rising prices, growing unemployment, collapse of land and order and threats to forests and environment. "We have moved LAQs, Calling attention motions and private member resolutions on these issues for discussions," he said. Alemao said that the opposition will unitedly ensure response and accountability from the government.

# Hubli Man Arrested In ₹14.67 Lakh 'Digital Arrest' Cyber Fraud Case

## Team Goemkarponn

**Panaji:** Cyber Crime Police Station Goa has arrested a Karnataka-based accused in connection with a cyber fraud case involving ₹14.67 lakh, where a Miramar resident was

allegedly subjected to a so-called "digital arrest". The offence was registered on January 21, 2026, under Crime No. 12/2026, invoking Sections 318(4), 319(2) read with 3(5) of the BNS Act 2023 and Section 66-D of the IT Act, based

on a complaint filed by a resident of Miramar, Tiswadi. Police said that on January 31, 2026, the accused, along with accomplices, allegedly used multiple mobile numbers to impersonate officials of Telecom Regulatory Authority



of India (TRAI) and the Supreme Court of India. The complainant was allegedly threatened with false allegations of Aadhaar misuse for SIM card issuance and was coerced into a so-called "digital arrest."

# Gujarat Man Held In ₹7.72 Lakh Cyber Fraud Case Registered In Goa

## Team Goemkarponn

**Panaji:** Cyber Crime Police Station Goa has arrested a Gujarat-based accused in connection with a major cyber fraud case involving ₹7.72 lakh siphoned off from a complainant's bank account. The offence was registered on September 9, 2025, under Crime No. 30/2025, invoking Sections 318(4), 319(2) read with 3(5) of the BNS Act 2023 and Section 66-D of the IT Act, based on a complaint filed by a resident of Bandora, Ponda. Police said that on May 21, 2025, the accused, along with others, allegedly sent a fraudulent bank message containing a suspicious APK file to the complainant. After the file was installed, the victim's mobile phone was locked and unauthorized transactions amounting



to ₹7,72,000 were made from his account at Bank of Maharashtra to accounts linked to the accused. Following a detailed technical and financial probe, the suspect was traced to Netrang in Bharuch district of Gujarat. A police team led by PSI Manesh Dabale and PC Sunil Renati, under the supervision of SP Rahul Gupta, IPS, ASP B.V. Shridevi, IPS, and PI Deepak Pednekar, arrested Manojbhai Bhimbhai Vasava, a resident of Tekara Faliyu, Kantipada, Netrang, Bharuch, Gujarat. The arrested accused was produced before the court and remanded to police custody.

# PWD Min inspects Upasnagar stretch, assures footbridge and feasibility study for underpass

## Team Goemkarponn

**UPASNAGAR:** A long-pending demand for safer pedestrian access at Upasnagar gained fresh momentum after PWD Minister Digambar Kamat on Wednesday conducted a joint inspection of the area along with Cortalim MLA Anton Vas and local residents. During the site visit, locals reiterated their demand for an underpass, stating that the flyover has made crossing the busy



stretch risky, particularly for schoolchildren, senior citizens and daily commuters. Responding to the concerns, Kamat assured that the department would explore practical solutions to ease pedestrian movement.

Addressing residents, Kamat said that if constructing a full-fledged underpass is not technically viable, the government would consider installing a foot overbridge equipped with escalators to assist elderly

persons and others who may find it difficult to use staircases. He further stated that officials would examine the feasibility of creating a motorable underpass beneath the flyover, provided structural and safety parameters permit such a move. MLA Anton Vas said that a major portion of the issue had been addressed following the joint inspection and direct interaction with engineers and residents.

# Min Rohan Khaunte Honoured At PATWA Awards During ITB Berlin 2026

## Team Goemkarponn

**Berlin:** Goa and its tourism leadership received global recognition at the PATWA Awards 2026 held on the sidelines of ITB Berlin, one of the world's leading travel trade exhibitions.

Goa Tourism Minister Rohan Khaunte was conferred the "Tourism Minister of the Year – Innovation (Asia)" award by the Pacific Area Travel Writers Association in recognition of his leadership and initiatives aimed at transforming Goa's tourism landscape.

Accepting the award, Khaunte said the recognition belonged to the people of Goa. "Tourism in Goa is not just about destinations, it is about our communities, culture and environment. Our vision is to build a tourism model that is regenerative, inclusive



and sustainable while ensuring that tourism benefits every Goan," he stated.

# Compassion Must Guide Global Decision Making in Times of Uncertainty

■ Exhibition on the Tibetan journey of exile and resilience opens at the Museum of Goa.

## Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** Compassion must play a central role in international decision making if the world hopes to reduce conflict in an increasingly uncertain global environment, Prof. Varun Sahni said while inaugurating the exhibition *Refuge, Rights & Resilience: The Tibetan Story* at the Museum of Goa.

The exhibition has been jointly curated by the Tibet Museum and the Museum of Goa as part of the larger initiative *The Infinite Ripple – 90 Years of Compassion*. The event also featured a keynote address titled "Compassion in a Complex and Often Cruel World." During the talk, Sahni reflected on the evolving global order, highlighting challenges such as geopolitical power shifts, rising extremism and environmental



degradation. He argued that many global crises are intensified by a lack of compassion in policy making and international relations.

Recalling an earlier interaction with Tenzin Gyatso, Sahni said he was once told that conflict in world politics would remain unavoidable until compassion became the foundation of decision making. Over time, he said, the significance of that observation had become increasingly clear. Sahni outlined three broad categories of

contemporary global problems. These include emerging challenges like climate change and pandemics, long standing issues such as trade and resource scarcity that now require new solutions, and traditional security concerns complicated by the involvement of new actors and technologies. He described the current global moment as one shaped by rapid technological change, fragile political systems and growing cultural polarisation.

Discussing the roots

of cruelty in human behaviour, Sahni suggested it can stem from insecurity, learned attitudes, power dynamics or destructive impulses. However, he stressed that expanding empathy can counter many forms of cruelty. Compassion, he explained, goes beyond empathy because it motivates action and a willingness to help others. The exhibition highlights the Tibetan experience of exile since 1959 and the efforts to preserve cultural identity without territorial sovereignty. Tenzin Topdhen described the display as a story of resilience and human endurance.

Through archival documents, photographs and personal narratives, the exhibition explores themes of memory, rights and cultural continuity. It will remain open to visitors at the Museum of Goa until March 8.



## India Moves to Develop 'Bodyguard Satellites' to Protect Space Assets

■ Government works with startups on new technology to counter growing threats in orbit

**New Delhi:** India is stepping up efforts to safeguard its space infrastructure by encouraging private startups to develop specialised "bodyguard satellites" designed to protect critical spacecraft from potential threats in orbit. The initiative is being pursued as part of a broader national security strategy amid rising geopolitical tensions and growing concerns about the vulnerability of satellites used for surveillance, communication and defence operations. Discussions between government agencies and private space companies have reportedly reached an advanced stage, with the first experimental satellite expected to be launched during the first half of this year. These satellites are intended to escort and defend valuable spacecraft by monitoring nearby activity and responding to suspicious movements. Additional test launches may take place by the end of the year or early next year. Once the technology is proven, government agencies are expected to acquire and further develop the system for wider deployment. Security planners in India have become increasingly aware of potential risks in space following regional tensions and evolving military capabilities. A recent confrontation between India and Pakistan highlighted how satellites can play

a crucial role in modern warfare by enabling target identification and surveillance. The episode also exposed certain gaps in India's space monitoring network, prompting efforts to strengthen defensive capabilities in orbit. Concerns were also raised after a near incident in 2024 when a spacecraft from a neighbouring country reportedly approached within one kilometre of an Indian satellite that was carrying out mapping and observation activities. Such proximity can allow foreign satellites to interfere with or monitor sensitive missions. The proposed bodyguard satellites are expected to use advanced technologies. One concept involves a robotic arm capable of attaching to and repositioning suspicious spacecraft. Another design aims to neutralise smaller satellites by enclosing them and moving them away from protected assets. The project forms part of a larger plan to enhance India's space surveillance capacity. The government has accelerated work on a space based monitoring programme that aims to launch more than 50 surveillance satellites capable of day and night observation in all weather conditions. In the long term, India intends to deploy as many as 150 additional satellites to create a comprehensive monitoring network over its borders and surrounding regions.

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## Taxi Policy Talks Inconclusive; Committee to Examine Digital Platform Proposal

digital taxi policy forward. Representatives said they would also consult members of other associations and gather suggestions and views, which will later be placed before the committee expected to be constituted by the government.

Speaking after the meeting, Calangute MLA Michael Lobo said taxi

fares should be uniform and transparent across Goa, with rates made available on a digital platform accessible to the public. He added that some taxi associations have already agreed in principle to the proposal discussed during the meeting. Chief Minister Pramod Sawant said the draft Digital Taxi Policy

is intended to benefit both taxi operators and tourists and has received a positive response from several stakeholders.

He expressed confidence that once the committee is in place, the issues raised by operators can be resolved and the policy framework will move forward. Sawant also referred to an internal

meeting of taxi operators scheduled for Monday.

Tourism Minister Rohan Khaunte said the concerns raised by taxi associations regarding technology integration had been addressed during the discussions. He said the government's aim is to bring all taxi operators onto a single platform with uniform fares across Goa.

## CM Urges Devotees to Strictly Follow Rules During Shirgao Lairai Jatra

a deeply revered festival that draws thousands of devotees from across Goa. During his visit, the Chief Minister inspected the preparations being made for the annual jatra and interacted with officials and temple authorities regarding crowd management, safety measures and overall

arrangements. Emphasising the importance of discipline during the festival, Sawant appealed to devotees to strictly adhere to the guidelines in place. "Devotees, including Dhonds, should maintain discipline and strictly follow the rules during the Lairai Jatra," he said.

The Shirgao Jatra is known for its unique rituals, including the traditional fire-walking ceremony performed by Dhonds, and attracts a large gathering of devotees each year. The Chief Minister expressed hope that the festival would be conducted peacefully and smoothly.

## 'Not Ready for App-Based Taxis': Union Leader Yogesh 'Mogambo' Govekar

the time the government started dreaming about the taxi app. Before that we were termed as brand ambassadors of the tourism industry," he said. Opposing the proposed app-based system, Govekar said taxi operators prefer to continue operating through the existing traditional model.

## “A Unique Leader”: Canada’s Mark Carney Praises PM Modi’s Focus and Work Ethic

■ Canadian Prime Minister highlights India’s economic reforms and digital payment success after recent visit

**New Delhi:** Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney has described Narendra Modi as a highly focused and distinctive global leader following his recent visit to India. Speaking at an event organised by the Lowy Institute in Australia, Carney shared his impressions after meeting Modi during discussions held earlier this week in New Delhi and Mumbai. During the conversation, the moderator referred to Modi as a dominant figure in global politics, prompting Carney to reflect on the Indian prime



minister’s leadership style and long political career. He described Modi as an exceptional leader with an intense work ethic, noting that he has served in public office for about 25 years without taking a day off. According to Carney, Modi has consistently remained active in political outreach,

regularly addressing massive public gatherings across the country. Carney also highlighted Modi’s emphasis on delivering tangible results, particularly in the area of financial and digital reforms. He praised India’s digital payment infrastructure, especially the Unified Payments

Interface, describing it as a transformative system that allows real time transfers directly to individuals.

The Canadian leader noted that the platform has played a significant role in reducing leakages in financial transfers while helping bring millions of people into the formal financial system.

The rapid growth of digital transactions through UPI has often been cited as a key milestone in India’s broader economic and technological transformation.



## US Submarine Sinks Iranian Warship in Indian Ocean

■ Torpedo strike on IRIS Dena marks first American submarine attack on an enemy vessel since World War II

**New Delhi:** An Iranian naval frigate was sunk in the Indian Ocean earlier this week after being struck by a torpedo launched from a United States submarine, marking the first time since the World War II that an American submarine has destroyed an enemy vessel in combat.

The warship, identified as the IRIS Dena, went down on March 4 roughly 40 nautical miles south of Galle.

The vessel had earlier participated in the multinational naval exercise MILAN 2026 naval exercise and an international fleet review in Visakhapatnam before beginning its return journey westward. The strike was carried out by a Los Angeles-class submarine using a Mark 48 torpedo, a sophisticated underwater

weapon designed to destroy heavily armed vessels.

The torpedo detonates beneath a ship’s hull rather than striking above the waterline, creating a powerful gas bubble that rapidly expands and collapses.

This process lifts and destabilises the vessel, often causing severe structural damage that can break the hull or disable critical systems.

The Mark 48 torpedo measures about 19 feet in length, weighs around 3,700 pounds and carries a 650 pound warhead. Equipped with advanced guidance systems, it can track targets using active or passive sonar and continue pursuing them even after an initial miss. The weapon is widely regarded as one of the most lethal anti ship torpedoes currently deployed.

## “Terrorism Is an Existential Threat”: India Urges Global Unity Against ISIS and Al Qaeda

■ Call made at United Nations as India highlights growing danger from terror groups and emerging technologies

**New Delhi:** India has called on the international community to strengthen cooperation in the fight against global terrorism, warning that extremist organisations such as Islamic State and Al Qaeda continue to pose a serious danger to global stability. Speaking during an annual ambassador level briefing organised by



the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism at the United Nations, India stressed that terrorism remains one of the most significant threats to

international peace and security. The country emphasised that extremist violence transcends national borders and must be addressed through

coordinated global action. India also pointed to the need for stronger international cooperation against terror networks and their proxy groups. The statement referred to the April 2025 attack in Pahalgam, which was carried out by The Resistance Front, believed to be linked to Lashkar-e-Taiba.

## “War Has Reached India’s Doorstep”: Congress Raises Alarm After Iranian Warship Sunk Near Sri Lanka

■ Opposition warns of security and economic risks as West Asia conflict moves closer to India’s maritime region

**New Delhi:** The opposition party Indian National Congress has expressed concern over the escalating conflict in West Asia, warning that the situation is now unfolding dangerously close to India’s maritime neighbourhood. The remarks followed reports that an Iranian naval vessel was sunk by a United States submarine roughly 40 miles off the coast of Sri Lanka.



In a statement posted on social media, the party said the incident signalled that the ongoing confrontation involving Iran, Israel and the United

States was moving closer to India’s strategic region. According to the party, the sinking of the Iranian vessel represented a serious escalation of maritime hostilities that could draw the broader region into an unpredictable conflict. Congress also pointed out that the Iranian warship had recently taken part in a naval event hosted by the Indian Navy before leaving Indian waters.

## “BJP Ready With Strong Candidates for All 126 Seats”: Himanta Sarma Ahead of Assam Polls

■ Party begins final screening process as election committee prepares to decide candidates.

**New Delhi:** Himanta Biswa Sarma said the Bharatiya Janata Party has entered the final stage of selecting candidates for the upcoming Assam Legislative Assembly election, with the party confident of fielding strong contenders across all constituencies. The chief minister made the remarks while addressing the media after attending an official programme in Guwahati. Earlier in the day, Sarma ceremonially handed over



appointment letters to newly selected officers of the Assam Civil Service and other allied services at the Damodardeva International Auditorium. During the event, the state government also inducted 143 new vehicles into

the fleet of the Assam Forest Department. The vehicles were flagged off to improve field level monitoring and strengthen protection of forest resources, particularly in remote and heavily forested areas of the state. Addressing the newly appointed officers, Sarma congratulated them on their selection and urged them to carry out their duties with dedication, integrity and a strong commitment to public service.

# “England Are a Dangerous, Street Smart Team”: Morne Morkel Ahead of T20 World Cup Semi Final

■ India prepare for high pressure clash against England at Wankhede with a place in the final on the line.

**New Delhi:** India are set to face England in the second semi final of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup on March 5 at the iconic Wankhede Stadium, with both teams aiming to secure a spot in the final in Ahmedabad.

Ahead of the crucial encounter, India's bowling coach Morne Morkel cautioned that England cannot be taken lightly despite India's dominant victory over them in their previous meeting in February 2025. In that match, India had registered a massive 150 run win. Speaking



before the game, Morkel described England as a street smart side with significant depth and quality.

He pointed out that their long batting lineup and attacking mindset make them particularly dangerous in the T20 format. According to him,

England's fearless style of play often creates opportunities and puts constant pressure on opponents. Morkel added that the semi final is expected to be an intense contest between two aggressive teams. He stressed that the side capable of managing

pressure better, reading the conditions quickly and maintaining composure during crucial moments would have the best chance of progressing to the final. Both teams have had similar journeys in the tournament. The India national cricket team and the England cricket team have each won six of their seven matches so far. England, led by Harry Brook, began their campaign with a narrow victory over Nepal but suffered a defeat against the West Indies before recovering strongly to reach the knockout stage.

# “India Series Preparation Helped Us Crack These Conditions”: Finn Allen After Blazing T20 World Cup Semifinal Century

■ Explosive knock powers New Zealand into the final with dominant win over South Africa.

**New Delhi:** New Zealand opener Finn Allen credited a pre tournament series against India national cricket team for helping his side adapt to challenging conditions after his stunning century guided New Zealand national cricket team into the final of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup. Allen delivered a sensational unbeaten 100 off just 33 balls as New Zealand secured a commanding nine wicket



victory over South Africa national cricket team in

the semifinal at Eden Gardens. His explosive innings, filled with towering sixes and crisp boundaries, helped the team chase down a target of 170 in only 12.5 overs with 43 balls remaining. The opener praised the bowlers for setting the foundation for the win, saying early wickets and sustained pressure made the task significantly easier for the batters. He noted that the team's earlier five match series

in India on similar black soil pitches played a major role in their preparation for the tournament. Allen explained that the experience of playing several games on such surfaces helped the team understand the conditions better and adjust their approach. Even though New Zealand lost that series, he said the players gained valuable lessons and confidence from competing in those challenging environments.



## State Judo Championships 2025-26 Conclude with Strong Performances Across Goa

■ Junior and senior athletes showcase skill and discipline as clubs compete for top honours

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** The State Judo Championships 2025-26, organised by the Goa Judo Association, concluded successfully after a competitive tournament featuring junior and senior athletes in both men's and women's categories. Participants from several clubs and training centres across the state competed in the event, reflecting the growing popularity and improving standard of the sport in Goa. In the Junior Men division, Pawn Patel of RCC Ponda secured gold in the below 55 kg category, while Sido Murmu from RCC Panaji finished first in the below 60 kg event. Rishu Yadav of SAI STC Ponda claimed the top spot in the below 66 kg category and Pruthviraj Herekar of Shri Bhumika Judo Sangh won gold in the below 81 kg division. Samarth Churmuri from RCC Ponda emerged victorious in the above 100 kg category. Shri Bhumika Judo Sangh claimed the overall championship

title in Junior Men, with RCC Ponda finishing as runners up. In the Junior Women section, Sherin Varghese of Shri Bhumika Judo Sangh won gold in the below 44 kg category. Trisha Kawat from SAI STC Peddem secured first place in the below 48 kg division and Vidhya Jamadar of RCC Panaji topped the below 52 kg category. Aryan Kadam of Warrior Academy won the below 57 kg event while Suhana Parwar from Jaya Dojo finished first in the below 63 kg category. Maybiti Murmu of RCC Panaji and Kashish Kharude from Shri Bhumika Judo Sangh secured gold in the above 70 kg and above 78 kg categories respectively. Shri Bhumika Judo Sangh emerged as overall champions in Junior Women, with RCC Panaji finishing runners up. In the Senior Men competition, Jagdish Yadahalli of RCC Panaji won gold in the below 55 kg category while Nippu Yadav of SAI STC Ponda topped the below 60 kg event.

# “Enthusiasm of Members Makes First Carrom Tournament a Success,” Says Gymkhana President

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** Panaji witnessed a lively sporting atmosphere as the Panjim Gymkhana successfully conducted the first edition of its Members Carrom Tournament, drawing strong participation and competitive enthusiasm from club members. The

week long event marked a promising beginning for the club's indoor sports calendar and highlighted the growing interest in traditional board games among members. A total of 17 participants took part in the inaugural competition, which was formally opened by Sameer Kakodkar,



who declared the tournament open and

encouraged players to compete with dedication

## Prakash Arolkar Clinches Title as Panjim Gymkhana Hosts Its Inaugural Members Carrom Competition.

while maintaining the spirit of fair play and sportsmanship. The tournament was held from February 23 to February 28 and featured closely fought matches every evening. Participants displayed impressive skill and focus throughout the rounds, creating an engaging

atmosphere for members who gathered to watch the games. After several competitive matches, the tournament reached an exciting finale on February 28. In the decisive clash, Prakash Arolkar delivered a strong performance to secure the championship title of the inaugural edition.